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IF Directorate engineers earn honors by TTCP

by Fran Crumb, Information Directorate

ROME, N.Y. — Three Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL) Information Directorate engineers have been honored for their work on a three-year study to evaluate the potential for military use of commercial satellite-based personal communications (SPCS).

Brian T. Spink, E. Paul Ratazzi and Helen Demers have been presented with achievement awards by The Technical Cooperation Program (TTCP), an international organization that collaborates in defense scientific and technical information exchange. The TTCP research activities involve the defense forces of Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the U.S.

The three were cited for contributions to a study and demonstration by the organization's Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence (C3I) Group Technical Panel on Space and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Communications. The study focused on the potential military applications of SPCS – such as cellular phones and pagers – and identified both capabilities and vulnerabilities of the systems.

Military benefits of using the proliferating commercial systems were determined to be significant, as long as decision makers weigh practical limitations and potential vulnerabilities that were identified.

The study indicated that civilian satellite communication systems offer both new capabilities and additional capacity in various military roles involving reporting, observers, command and control, humanitarian efforts, search and rescue missions and logistics tracking.

All three award-winners are assigned to the Information Directorate's Information Grid Division. Spink is with the Defensive Information Warfare Branch and Ratazzi is with the Information Connectivity Branch, both at Rome. Demers is with the division's Platform Connectivity Branch at Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio. @